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TAGS: AORC EAID ECON PHUM UNGA

SUBJECT: VOTING INSTRUCTION FOR A/C.2/62/L.8, UNILATERAL ECONOMIC MEASURES AS A MEANS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COERCION AGAINST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

REF: STATE 157330

¶1. This is an action request.

¶2. USUN is instructed to call for a vote and vote NO on the following resolution in the UNGA plenary: A/C.2/62/L.8, "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries".

¶3. USUN should draw from the following language to provide an explanation of vote:

"The United States opposes this resolution. Every state has the sovereign power to restrict or cut off trade or other commerce with particular nations when the state believes it is in its national economic or security interest to do so. The suggestion that there is any international legal prohibition against such a right is, at best, fatuous. That is why so many countries have abstained from supporting this resolution today.

Sanctions are specifically provided for under the UN Charter because the framers saw them as an effective, generally interim, targeted measure that, as part of a broader diplomatic and political strategy, can help the international community restore peace and security without resort to the use of force. Sanctions should not be used in all cases and must be carefully calibrated to achieve their objectives. In some instances, sanctions are designed to pressure a state to return to generally accepted international norms, such as democracy and rule of law. In other instances, sanctions such as arms embargoes, prohibitions on access to nuclear materials, and others, play a critical role in denying states the tools they need to engage in harmful acts that threaten international peace and security.

Member States must admit, if only to themselves, that this resolution is actually aimed at undermining the international community's ability to respond effectively to acts that -- by their very nature and enormity -- are offensive to genuine international norms, such as human rights, democracy, and rule of law. There must be a consequence for such actions lest the offending states have no incentive or reason to abandon them. Economic sanctions -- whether multilateral or unilateral -- can be and in fact have been effective means to achieve legitimate foreign policy objectives. For example, they have cut financial flows to corrupt powers involved in human rights violations and have also led to a regime's choice to give up nuclear weapons ambitions.

My government is not prepared to concede that sanctions are not a legitimate and effective tool of statecraft. This resolution will do nothing to change that view."

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